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NEWS RELEASE



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SBA Declares Economic Injury Disaster in the Interior
Governor applauds rapid response

(Juneau) – Governor Frank H. Murkowski today commended the U.S. Small Business Administration for its rapid response in declaring Alaska's Interior a disaster area due to the ongoing wildfires.

News came early today in the form of a Declaration of Economic Injury Disaster for Fairbanks North Star Borough, the Alaska Gateway Regional Educational Attendance Area (REAA), Denali Borough, Copper River REAA, Delta/Greely REAA, Yukon Flats REAA and the Yukon-Koyukuk REAA.

"Because of the efforts made by our Congressional Delegation, SBA and Commissioner Edgar Blatchford of the Department of Community and Economic Development, businesses that have suffered economic impacts from the devastating fires in the Interior will soon see financial relief," said Governor Murkowski. "I commend the SBA for working with the state to move this process along so rapidly."

SBA Economic Injury Disaster Loans are available to small businesses in the affected areas named in the disaster declaration. Businesses may request up to \$1.5 million in loans to assist in paying fixed debts, payroll, accounts payable, and other obligations they cannot meet due to the economic impact caused by the fires.

"We are working diligently with SBA to assist them in setting up space in our Fairbanks and Tok offices," said Commissioner Blatchford. "SBA representatives will likely arrive within the next two weeks."

Businesses may obtain information and loan applications by writing SBA at P.O. Box 419004, Sacramento, CA 95841 or by calling (800) 488-5323. Hearing impaired individuals may call (916) 735-1683. The filing deadline is April 22, 2005.

For more information visit the SBA's website at <http://www.sba.gov/disaster>.

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